



News Release

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Contacts: [Carolyn Cox](#), Office of Drinking Water
[Gordon MacCracken](#), Communications Office

360-236-3162

360-236-4072

Safe, reliable drinking water efforts result in recognition from agency

OLYMPIA — Delivering safe, reliable drinking water around the clock can be a daunting challenge, especially when problems are big and resources are limited. Each year during National Drinking Water Week, the state Department of Health honors drinking water professionals and organizations for their successes in meeting the challenges.

Drinking Water Week will be observed May 2-8 this year.

“Many of this year’s award recipients overcame adversity to some extent, particularly the smaller water systems,” said Denise Clifford, director of the agency’s Office of Drinking Water. “It’s important to recognize these outstanding individuals and organizations. They’ve all done a great job of keeping water safe to drink and responding quickly to emergencies.”

Washington’s 2010 honorees are:

Paula Brock, Pine Terrace Water Association – “Going Above and Beyond”

Paula Brock, president of the Pine Terrace Water Association on Whidbey Island, is receiving the “Going Above and Beyond” award. She had to navigate several setbacks, yet refused to give up her quest to upgrade the community’s undersized, inadequate water system. The upgrades are now complete. The award will be presented at 5:30 p.m. May 3 at the community’s new reservoir, 942 Yvonne Ave. near Oak Harbor.

Sunrise Beach Association Board of Directors – “Most Improved”

A few years ago, the Sunrise Beach water system on Lopez Island struggled with frequent water outages, bacterial contamination, arsenic levels that exceeded safe drinking water standards, and a continuous boil-water advisory. The board completely rebuilt the small water system. Its customers now have consistent access to safe, reliable drinking water. The award will be presented May 7 on Lopez Island.

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Kennewick Water Treatment Plant – “Grace under Pressure”

The City of Kennewick faced a perfect storm last July. The Kennewick Irrigation District had a canal leak that would leave the city without irrigation water service for two weeks. Temperatures were above 100 degrees. The city also had electrical problems with pumps at its water treatment plant and water storage levels were declining. Chief operator Paul Briggs and the plant staff kept the pumps working, despite some failures, and got the city through the crisis. The award will be presented during a meeting of the Kennewick City Council at 7 p.m. May 4.

Drew Noble – “Friend of Drinking Water”

Drew Noble of H2O Management Services in Mason County is the 2010 “Friend of Drinking Water.” Noble, who has served on the Department of Health’s Water Supply Advisory Committee, has helped struggling water systems through technical and managerial problems. Office of Drinking Water workers said he has “a passion for providing safe and reliable drinking water...and tries to do so at a reasonable price.” The award will be presented at 1:30 p.m. May 6 at the Emerald Lake Water System Pumphouse, 31 E. Emerald Lake Drive W., Grapeview.

Carl McCrary, City of Kalama – “Operator of the Year”

The nomination of Carl McCrary says it all: “One person’s attitude can make a big difference in the success of the utility.” McCrary, the City of Kalama’s public works director, has faced challenges including flooding, maintenance issues and a significant water outage. “Carl responds very quickly to any emergency, always praises his staff and ...considers himself a true partner with us in the business of providing safe drinking water for his town,” the nomination said. The award will be presented during a Kalama City Council meeting that starts at 7 p.m. May 5.

Monte Brachmann, City of Camas – “Lifetime Achievement”

Monte Brachmann, recently retired public works director for the City of Camas, will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award for his many contributions to the drinking water industry. Brachmann helped found the Lower Columbia Subsection of the American Water Works Association. He led and serves on the Washington Waterworks Operator Certification Advisory Committee and state advisory boards. The award will be presented at 10 a.m. May 13 during a conference of the state chapter of the American Water Works Association in Tacoma.

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